PRESIDENT’S EDITORIAL

WELCOME TO GLASGOW!

Dear ESSKA members and friends of ESSKA,

ESSKA’s Barcelona Congress seems like yesterday and yet, here we are, almost in Glasgow. Where did these two years go? They just flashed past. As I wrote before, we have been continuously on the road and promoting ESSKA; the Board and myself, the Section and Committee chairmen, and behind us our super-efficient staff. Our travels inside and outside Europe seem to have paid off, and we have given ESSKA an increasingly global footprint. For instance, our top three congress abstract submitting countries are now the US, Japan and South Korea, and those countries which received an official ESSKA visit (by Board Members) have doubled their numbers. Overall, we have received a record number of submitted abstracts (close to 1700) from 70 countries, including every European nation.

As for the Glasgow congress, everything has been meticulously prepared. Our scientific team, under the leadership of Gino Kerkhoffs, Michael Hirschmann and Fares Haddad, and Congress President Jon Karlsson, has worked intensively for months to assemble a superb programme. Wolfgang Nebelung and his team have contributed to the making. This will reflect the entire spectrum of ESSKA’s focus on their specialized subjects. We have therefore focused on their specialized subjects. We have also agreed upon venues for ESSKA’s future congresses: Milan in 2020 and Paris in 2022. This enabled them to smoothly organise the four open-section meetings last autumn, and to combine them all, as a joint event, for autumn 2019 in Madrid. This will not be a small ESSKA meeting, but a sizeable gathering that will probably exceed 10 000 participants.

As President, I am more than satisfied to observe the vibrant work of our society, its many projects under my mandate, and its future opportunities. It was a real privilege and pleasure to serve ESSKA, and I am proud to pass such a brightly burning torch to my friend David Dejour. I am convinced that he will continue in the same direction, with all the enthusiasm and empathy behind him.

My first KSSTA editorial, at the start of my presidency, was called ‘The making of ESSKA: from an organisation to an institution’. That just about sums it up. I could never have expected such a history, and such growth, when I hired ESSKA’s first professional staffer (a part-timer) way back in 2005.

At the congress my presidency will come to an end, so it may be apposite to survey ESSKA’s progress over my two year tenure. We started with a Strategic Retreat in Megève, France. The first of such meetings was launched under Nick van Dijk and they have become a core part of ESSKA’s management strategy. They give us an overview of the society’s work, the leadership’s hopes and fears, and the staff’s capacity. I would recommend something like this for every non-profit association: they really do streamline the efforts of an otherwise diverse team.

At Megève we thrashed out—I think that’s the term!—‘Maximizing ESSKA’s Future Impact and Leadership’, a ten-point plan for 2016-2020. Although we are only half way down the road, I am proud to say that we are well ahead of the curve.

Under Martin Lind, our Education Secretary, we are preparing an education road map, which covers our super-specialties. Under David Dejour, we are establishing a standardised Course Curriculum, with an online evaluation linked to ESSKA’s Academy. We have strengthened our internal structure by hiring a Meetings Manager, and also a Corporate Relations Manager. We are also improving our staff structure, under the extraordinary leadership of our Executive Director Zhanna Kovalchuk. This enabled them to smoothly organise the four open-section meetings last autumn, and to combine them all, as a joint event, for autumn 2019 in Madrid. This will not be a small ESSKA meeting, but a sizeable gathering that will probably exceed 10 000 participants.

Despite all this, ESSKA has consolidated its financial basis, thanks to the ESSKA Foundation, which is currently supporting three sizeable initiatives. The first is the Cycling for Science; the second is the Pediatric ACL monitoring initiative (PAMI), which will launch its international database at Glasgow; and the third is ESSKA’s Allograft Initiative, which will also be launched in Glasgow. ESSKA’s publications have also been consolidated, with KSSTA establishing itself in the 3+ impact factor category, JEO making it into Medline, the Academy building up traffic, and books flying off the shelves. Future plans include KSSTA’s friendly cooperation with some of our larger affiliated societies and, eventually, another scientific journal.

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